

of economic and material conditions but on the more vital questions of what the people think about their conditions, and what they believe their needs to be. A parallel inquiry into the attitudes and ambitions of city dwellers would be interesting and pertinent; and if such were to be made we would hope it be conducted with the same thoroughness and imagination as these inquiries into rural life.

JAMES MAXWELL.

Milbank Memorial Fund. *Approaches to Problems of High Fertility in Agrarian Societies: Papers presented at the 1951 Annual Conference.* New York, 1952: Milbank Memorial Fund. Pp. 171. Price \$1.00.

It is to be hoped that the contents of this timely volume will be in the hearts and heads of all the delegates to the coming Bombay Conference of the International Planned Parenthood Committee. For this is an up to the minute survey of our present knowledge of the approaches to the problems of those countries now in the early expanding phase of the demographic cycle.

The papers in this volume were given to the 1951 Annual Conference of the Milbank Memorial Fund, under the chairmanship of Professor Frank W. Notestein.

After an introductory talk on the demographic gap by Dr. Rupert B. Vance, of the University of North Carolina, which he subtitled "the dilemma of modernization programs," the conference discussed the problems under three headings, cultural bases of agrarian fertility patterns, means of fertility control and implications for research and policy.

Professor Vance's discussion of "this widening spread between fertility and mortality we call the demographic gap" highlighted the facts that the industrialization of India and China will take place without the "slack for demographic growth" of earlier industrial revolutions, and that, since the closure of the gap is usually a slow process, the possibility cannot be ruled out that the gap might be closed by a reascent of mortality rates.

With this tragic possibility in mind, it is very interesting to read Dr. Arthur C. Bunce's opinion that provided there were a new, simple, contraceptive method available, there would not be any basic antagonism on the part of Oriental women towards fertility control. Since Dr. Bunce lived for some years in Korea and for the last five was Chief of the Economic Co-operation Administration Special Missions to Korea and Thailand, this view carries weight. Again and again throughout this conference from different angles, speakers stress that present Western contraceptive methods are quite unsuitable for agrarian communities; a fact brought out sharply in the paper on the control of fertility in Japan, whose authors conclude that "the availability of contraceptive products in the markets and the availability of medical consultation for those willing to take advantage of it do not insure the use of contraception even in a population strongly motivated to limit fertility." In Japan, of course, abortion was available in 1950 and its effect is discussed in the end section of this paper.

Dr. Clair E. Folsome reviews recent research in the biochemical and medical fields, with particular reference to methods suitable for agrarian communities. All who heard Mr. Pirie's recent address to the *Eugenics Society*, will find it particularly interesting to compare the two surveys, since both underlined, to borrow Dr. Folsome's lively sentence, the "great need for large-scale investigations, under the freedom of academic ægis, if means to control this reproductive nutritional time bomb is to become available."

Puerto Rico, with its runaway population increase, is a "sharp illustration of the grave population problem of a large part of the world" and, since the population challenge has been recognized and is being met both by the Government and others, the people of Puerto Rico are living a pilot survey for other agrarian areas. Dr. Paul K. Hatt's paper on his study of some social and psychological aspects of human fertility in Puerto Rico merits a review to itself. Happily his forthcoming book will certainly be discussed

in this journal, and so the present reviewer will only mention one of the most interesting of his conclusions. The Puerto Rican women possess lower fertility values than the men and so changes in their status or their ability to bring reality into line with their aspirations would, in Dr. Hatt's view, "have major consequences for the level of fertility in Puerto Rico."

Dr. Millard Hansen describes the impressive research programme of Puerto Rico's College of Social Science and merely to read the list of questions the project seeks to answer is to get some insight into the complexity of the issues involved and the high quality of those working and advising on this programme.

Another study of first-rate importance, the United Nations Population Study in Mysore, is described by Dr. John D. Durand, while Mr. N. V. Sovani, of the Ghokale Institute in Poona, surveys the cultural attitudes to fertility control and the development of official policy in India.

This abundance of facts and these stimulating descriptions of field studies make this a very valuable volume. Yet perhaps the most important contributions of all are Dr. Warren S. Thompson's discussion on the type of knowledge needed for an adequate approach to the subject matter of this whole volume and Dr. Marshall C. Balfour's description of the practical administrative problems connected with aid to underdeveloped areas. These two papers alone would put this volume on to the book list of all interested in world population problems, for they are instinct with wisdom, balance and a depth of understanding and experience which are indeed rare.

RACHEL CONRAD.

De Castro, Josué. *Geography of Hunger.* (Foreword by Lord Boyd Orr.) London, 1952. Gollancz. Pp. 288. Price 18s.

THIS is one of those horrid twisted books. It is written by one from the western hemisphere who, godlike, knows all the answers and who, usually, imputes in others motives that are not admirable. The author, who is

described on the dust cover as "Chairman of Executive, Food and Agricultural Organization," demonstrates in his book considerable powers of compilation but small discipline in exposition. A severe pruning of the verbiage, to produce a book one-third the length, might result in a volume which would stimulate.

The author has been at pains to accumulate, but not to summarize, evidence of malnutrition, hunger and perennial starvation, spread over the majority of the earth's lands and people. His thesis, a novel and interesting one, is "the argument that overpopulation does not cause starvation... but that starvation is the cause of overpopulation." He considers an observable correlation between low protein intake and high birth-rate as cause and effect. The extremes quoted are Formosa with a birth-rate of 45.6 and a daily consumption of animal protein at 4.7 grams, and Sweden with a birth-rate of 15.0 and protein intake of 62.6 grams. He claims that "enough is known about protein metabolism so that we can trace the actual mechanism by which protein deficiency leads to increased fertility, while an abundance of protein has the opposite effect."

Believing sincerely in his hypothesis, de Castro claims that all we have to do is greatly to increase food production throughout the world and all the problems of overpopulation will solve themselves without the intervention of nasty neo-Malthusians who would endeavour, by artifice, deliberately to check reproduction. Even if de Castro's hypothesis could command wide acceptance, most would be only too well aware of a difficulty, not observed by the author of the book, that the relative rates of increase of food supply and change of population would have to be adjusted with nicety if any desirable end is to be achieved.

Quite how de Castro would organize the increase of world food supply would be interesting to know. Incidentally, if he were to proceed with his efforts he would find those whom he terms neo-Malthusians to be his helpers not his enemies, as he seems to believe. India might present de Castro,